

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES
National Institutes of Health
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
U.S. ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY



March 9, 2012

To: National Children's Study Community Members in Current and Potential Study Locations

From: Director, National Children's Study

Subject: National Children's Study Transitions

I am writing to tell you about some upcoming changes to the National Children's Study.

The National Children's Study is learning from and about families and communities across the country. It is truly a national effort. We began one part of the National Children's Study, called the Vanguard Study, in 2009 and have enrolled thousands of families. The Vanguard Study is an early phase of the National Children's Study that is active across the United States and will continue for 21 years. At first we used a door-to-door recruitment method and soon learned that we could improve the process. We have tested other recruitment methods that are more efficient and less expensive, yet keep the national scope of the Study. All locations for the Vanguard Study have been named and no new locations will be added. We plan to continue activity for all Vanguard Study participants and their communities until the Study is completed more than twenty years from now.

A larger Main Study with the goal of enrolling about 100,000 children from across the United States is planned to start in 2013. The Vanguard Study and the Main Study will continue in parallel with the Vanguard Study finishing ahead of the Main Study.

Using an orderly process to develop the Study is key. We are funded by Congress on a year-to-year basis and must make sure that we use our resources responsibly to maximize the value of the project so that it can continue over the next 20 years.

The National Children's Study uses a contract mechanism to gather information. This means that we award money to contractors, like your local Study Center. The contractors are conducting research activities and collecting information from families taking part in the Study. Your community has been working with a local contractor for National Children's Study activities.

Two changes are coming in the next year to year and a half.

The first is that the current round of contracts for collecting information for the National Children's Study ends this spring, and different contracts will end over the next 18 months. At the same time we will be announcing new contract opportunities utilizing a full and open competition. The contractor

working with your county can compete for the new contracts. If a new contractor is selected for your county, we will do our best to make sure that Study activities continue smoothly for your community.

The second change involves the locations for the Main Study. Several years ago, the National Center for Health Statistics used a scientific selection process to identify possible Study locations. Since then, we have learned a lot about conducting a large national study. We have concluded that we may have to change the location selection process so that we can improve the recruitment of participants for the Main Study. If we do change the process, your county may or may not be included in the Main Study plan. If your county is already participating in the Vanguard Study, your county will continue to take part in the Vanguard Study until the Study is done. At this time, we do not know what the outcome of the Main Study selection process will be and we may not know for another year.

In the meantime, we want to thank you for your interest in the National Children's Study. We will continue to share information about this very important, exciting, and valuable Study with you.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact us through our public e-mail account ContactNCS@mail.nih.gov.

Thank you again for your support and involvement.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "S. Hirschfeld", is positioned above the printed name and title.

Steven Hirschfeld, MD PhD
Captain, U.S. Public Health Service
Associate Director for Clinical Research
Eunice Kennedy Shriver National Institute of
Child Health and Human Development

Director
National Children's Study

Operations Chief and Chief Medical Officer
USPHS Rapid Deployment Force-1